



June 9, 2021

Dear Senator Tester, Senator Daines, and Representative Rosendale,

While you and your colleagues continue to search for a solution to high prescription drug costs, we urge you to protect patients access to medicine and innovative new treatments, and focus on directly addressing out-of-pocket costs. The recently introduced drug pricing proposal, H.R. 3 (Speaker Pelosi's legislation), limits innovation and decreases access to treatment options. This is bad policy. It is critical that Congress takes a more patient-centric approach to lowering the cost of prescriptions than what is included in this legislation.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) predicts H.R. 3 will reduce investment in research and development significantly, leading to fewer new medicines for patients living with chronic illnesses. This is not a commonsense solution to lowering patients' medication costs.

If signed into law, H.R. 3 would have the federal government set the prices for prescription medication based on what a handful of foreign countries pay. Patients in those countries often face restricted and reduced access to treatment options as well as significant delays in access to new medications. Patients in other developed countries experience, on average, an 18-month lag time between the time cancer drugs are available to them versus when those drugs are made available to patients here at home. Additionally, patients in countries whose governments enact mandated price setting have far fewer options. Between 2011 and 2018, 90 percent of new medicines launched are available in the United States compared to 59 percent in the United Kingdom, 50 percent in France and just 36 percent in Australia.

The changes proposed in H.R. 3 do not fully address the root causes of patient affordability. It would not prevent middlemen, such as PBMs and insurers from penalizing patients for using manufacturer copays to afford their prescriptions. Patients in Montana and across the country deserve solutions that ensure that deductibles and high out-of-pocket costs do not stand in the way of patient care.

On behalf of the Montana patients we work with, we urge you and your colleagues to come to the table to support a solution that addresses affordability, without restricting access.

Sincerely,

Brain Injury Alliance of Montana

Montana Bioscience Association

Mental Health America of Montana

Opportunity Resources, Inc.